

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WZ
SUBJ: SWAZILAND RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA

1. IN WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION WITH A.V. MAMBA, UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, I ASKED ABOUT PERFORMANCE OF SWAZILAND DELEGATION AT LAGOS CONFERENCE ON APARTHEID. MAMBA TOOK OCCASION TO EXPRESS PUZZLEMENT AND SLIGHT UNHAPPINESS THAT HIS INVITATIONS FOR WASHINGTON INPUT INTO SWAZILAND'S SPEECH (MBABANE IMMEDIATE CABLES 2122 AUGUST 5 AND 2271 AUGUST 16) HAD FAILED TO ELICIT ANY RESPONSE WHATEVER, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF IMPORTANCE USG ATTACHES TO APARTHEID ISSUE. HE WENT ON TO NOTE THAT CONFERENCE DECLARATIONS'S REFEREENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA'S AGGRESSIVE ACTS AGAINST NEIGHBORING STATES DID NOT RPT NOT REFER TO SWAZILAND.

2. WITH ONLY SLIGHT URGING FROM ME, MAMBA DESCRIBED HIS RELATIONS WITH HIS SOUTH AFRICAN COUNTERPARTS. CHARACTERIZING THE RELATIONSHIP AS "TELEPHONE DIPLOMACY," MAMBA SAID HE IS ON PHONE AT LEAST ONCE A DAY WITH FONOFF IN PRETORIA. HE SAID HIS RELATIONS WITH LATTER ARE EXCELLENT AND THAT FOR INSTANCE, HE CAN GET SOUTH AFRICANS

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TO AUTHORIZE OVERLAND TRAVEL FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS TO SWAZILAND WHO, FOR ANY REASON, HAVE NOT RECEIVED NECESSARY SOUTH AFRICAN VISA.

3. MAMBA SAID FULL BURDEN OF PREPARING PAPERS FOR UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS FALLS ON HIM. HE ADDED THAT HE IS TRYING TO GET SWAZILAND TO ASSERT ITSELF MORE IN THOSE MEETINGS, PARTICULARLY ON ISSUES ON WHICH IT FEELS STRONGLY, SUCH AS APARTHEID.

HE SHOWED ME PAPER HE HAD DRAFTED FOR CABINET CONSIDERATION IN PREPARATION FOR LAGOS MEETING, IN WHICH HE STATED THAT IT WAS HIGH TIME FOR SWAZILAND TO DROP IT SPASSIVE STANCE WHICH (THE PAPER SAID) WAS MAKING SWAZILAND INCREASINGLY VULNERABLE TO OTHER BLACK AFRICAN STATES. MAMBA SAID CABINET HAD REJECTED HIS FIRST DRAFT OF LAGOS CONFERENCE SPEECH BUT THAT HE HAD THEN ENLISTED ASSISTANCE OF VISITING SWAZI AMBASSADOR TO UN, NORMAN MALINGA, TO HELP SELL A REVISED DRAFT THAT WAS ONLY SLIGHTLY WATERED DOWN. (MAMBA WAS FORMERLY ASSIGNED TO UN MISSION.) IN OBSERVATION TO ME THAT WAS CONTRARY TO LOCAL CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, MAMBA SAID IT WAS NOT IN SWAZILAND'S INTEREST TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT RACIST POLICIES OF SOUTH AFRICA IN HOPE OF GETTING POTENTITIAL INVESTORS TO BELIEVE THAT SWAZILAND REMAINED ALOOF FROM INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. THIS IS SHORTSIGHTED, SAID MAMBA, BECAUSE SWAZILAND'S GOOD ECONOMIC SITUATION WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED IF THERE WERE CATASTROPHIC DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA ARISING OUT OF RACIST ATTITUDES; SWAZILAND SHOULD HELP FOCUS ATTENTION ON THOSE RACIAL WRONGS. HE SAID HIS APPROACH DID NOT RISK ENDANGERING SWAZILAND'S GOOD TRADE RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA BECAUSE LATTER SEPARATED ECONOMICS FROM POLITICS AND MAY EVEN RESPECT SWAZILAND MORE FOR STANDING UP FOR ITS BELIEFS. HE NOTED, THOUGH, THAT SOUGH AFRICA DOES NOT HESITATE TO LET SWAZILAND KNOW WHEN GOS TAKES CONCRETE ACTIONS THAT MIGHT NEGATIVELY AFFECT SOUTH AFRICA. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN SWAZILAND ACCEPTED THE (RELATIVELY) LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN EARLY POST-SOWETO DAYS, SOUTH AFRICA SIGNALLED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITS CONCERN TO GOS ON GROUNDS THAT REFUGEES POSED SECURITY PROBLEM FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

4. FOR DEPARTMENT: WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE INCREASING REQUESTS FROM MAMBA FOR USG INPUT INTO GOS PAPERS AND WOULD FIND IT HELPFUL TO LEARN REASONS FOR LACK OF DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO CABLES CITED PARA 1 ABOVE.

5. FOR PREPORIA: WE WOULD WELCOME ANY INFO COMING TO YOUR ATTENTION CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICAN FONOFF'S VIEWS ON ITS RELATIONS WITH SWAZI COUNTERPARTS.

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS
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Sent Date: 10-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: N/A
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